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EDITORIALS.

—DURING the past few years several institutions of higher education in the United States have begun the publication of the results of work done in their laboratories and seminars. Some regard this new departure with favor, while in the opinion of others it is a matter of regret. Of the aspects as related to Natural History alone we need to speak. The arguments against such publications are weighty. The literature on the subject is enormous; no less than 20,000 pages are required to contain the annual contributions of the world to zoology alone; and every new periodical adds just so much to the difficulty of keeping en rapport with the subject. Again with the multiplicity of periodicals there is a corresponding deterioration on the part of some in the quality of the matter published. With fewer chances for appearing in print the law of natural selection would weed out many a mediocre production.

On the other hand, these new journals have their strong points. America is lacking in facilities for the prompt publication of results. All of our publishing scientific societies are overwhelmed with papers, while our independent journals devoted to research are utterly inadequate to present more than a fraction of the papers of the better class. Combination between institutions to support new journals of the better class is apparently out of the question; while the persons who, like Professor Whitman and Mr. Allis, are willing to pay the deficit of a journal from their own pockets are lamentably few. To conduct investigations with no chance for the publication of the results obtained is discouraging. But since it is only by research that we can ever advance, every aid or encouragement to investigation should be welcomed. We can only hope that the editors of these new journals will exercise due critical care and that they will see to it that every paper published is an actual contribution to knowledge.

The bill recently introduced into the House of Representatives by Congressman Cogswell, appropriating 100,000 dollars for the extermination of the Gypsy Moth in Massachusetts seems to us pernicious. It is, if voted, sure to prove a precedent for further expenditures for the same purpose, for an unlimited term of years. The extermination of this pest is far from an easy task and for several years the State of Massachusetts has been sending good money after bad in its attempt

to accomplish the impossible task. Suppose for a moment that the various commissions were able to kill every moth except one pregnant female, and were then to rest from their labors. In a few years matters would be as bad as before. The Massachusetts commission have had nothing like such success. Their workmen have undoubtedly killed large numbers of these insects but each year shows the moth in a larger territory than it occupied the year before and extermination is no nearer than it was a dozen years ago. We do not wish to be understood as saying that the Gypsy Moth commission has done no good. It has checked the depredations as it can undoubtedly check them in the future. But this means, if the present methods are continued, a continual drain upon the treasury of the commonwealth which will only cease with that millennium which shall work a change in the morals of insects as well as of man.

In its future work the commission should employ as its head a trained entomologist who should devote his time, not to the hunting of Gypsy Moths in trees, hedge rows and garden patches, but in finding and introducing some natural enemy as has been so successfully done in the case of the Orange Vernalia in California. Moths, eggs, larvæ and cocoons will escape the most careful of field agents, but insect parasites will keep the pest in continual check and render the employment of an army of expensive workmen unnecessary.—K.

The numbers of the *American Naturalist* for the year 1893 were issued at the following dates, January, Jan. 11th; February, Feb. 4th; March, March 8th; April, April 5th; May, May 25; June, June 15th; July, July 24th; August, Aug. 25th; September, Sept. 30th; October, Oct. 31st; November, Nov. 24th, December, Dec. 13th.